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Tourism in Eastern Europe

MR. IONESCU: As often/a^{as} decision has been taken to encourage tourism, we have greeted it with pleasure. We did so because, on the one hand, we believe that everything done in favor of the latter proves the regime's trend to reintegrate Rumania into the great currents of our epoch. And we did so on the other hand, since we believe that the wish to make a reality of tourism implies numerous changes in Rumania's public or everyday life.

Whoever may imagine that tourism is but a third rate problem is quite wrong. Indeed, by the enormous sums of money involved and by the strong repercussions it has upon the economy, tourism represents one of the great efforts of international life in the economic and spiritual sectors.

I mentioned a few days ago the facilities granted by the Rumanian regime to foreign tourists anxious to come to Rumania's Summer resorts, and I have also mentioned what Rumania should be doing to attract the most possible foreign tourists.

And I now have before me an American paper in which an American newspaperman tells about his impressions after a trip in Eastern Europe. He states for example, the difficulties the foreign tourists meet with due to the faulty organization of certain state organizations in Rumania. So for example he tells us that he was unable to obtain a simple transit-visa through Hungary for Rumania and he was compelled thus to go through Yugoslavia. He also writes that at the Rumanian border he was compelled to lose much time waiting for some very careful but quite useless investigations of his motor-car, and he was quite amused when a frontier-guard asked him if he had a machine gun. Let him also mention that today Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are the only communist countries which may offer a certain comfort to foreign tourists. He admits that in

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Rumania food is very good but he complains of the very bad quality of Rumanian roads.

He mentions the fact that in all the countries behind the iron curtain every foreigner is considered to be a disagreeable tourist who may raise some objections when he is asked to pay a greater sum than due for food, drinks, housing or other commodities. Things revealed by the American newsman must stop indeed. They are but very small things, you may object! Small, indeed, but small things, and details too, arouse a certain state of mind and they can very often be very harmful to the effort made by tourism in Rumania, and they are often harmful to the reputation of the whole country.
